

Letters To The Editor

Sikh Nation or Khalistan

Sir, The recent re-emergence of the Sikh Nation or Khalistan stance, evoked exotically or indigenously, sounds apparently as re-enactment of the KISSA-KURSI-KA or reflection of the failure, frustration and infightings of the present Sikh leadership, at both the spiritual and political levels in Amritsar. The growing disaffection of the Sikh youths from Sikhism and oft-echoed allegations of improper utilisation of gurdwara incomes (now much above the revenues of the old Sikh kingdom of Lahore), so vehemently denounced by Guru Gobind Singh as poison, have, in fact, turned *man oucha* (ego high) and *mat neeven* (prudence low) instead of *mat ouchi* and *man neeven* of the controllers of the Sikh shrines. Probably they are wittingly oblivious of the qualitative, as well as, quantitative resultant harm reaching the innocent Sikhs within and without their Punjab.

Nothing mends without needling these days. The Sikhs have deep-rooted grievances and painful reminiscences of the solemn pledges done and undone by the accredited leaders of the national government soon before and after the independence yet the cry of cessation by the people, who have immeasurable

sacrifices for the Motherland at their credit, is importune at the present juncture when the entire community has not been taken into confidence as before. Nearly 45,000 Sikhs, young and old, filled the jails at tremendous physical and property loss to the community, to wash off the sins of Emergency.

The cry coming from multiple battling Akali Dals lends little credibility when the latest press statements of Sardar Badal and Sardar Sant Singh disown their own extremist views. Outbursts of belligerent Jathedars Talwandi and Sant Longowal are understandable but the involvement of so prudent and mature ecclesiastical head like Sardar G. S. Tohra, President of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, is unthinkable.

This is a humble appeal to the Sikh brethren at large and the Sikh citizens of the state other than mutilated Punjab to have proper appraisal of the conflicting statements emanating from the Sikh leadership and eschew all provocations, in the interest of peace and progress, from motivated elements which may even include ruling adversaries of the Akali Party and other face-saving opportunists.

—Gyani Brahma Singh

Ajmer

Sikh Community Problems

Sir, The Sikhs are the followers of a faith which advocates socialism, secularism and democracy. The Congress (I) under the dynamic and intelligent presidentship of Smt. Indira Gandhi, has also full and firm faith in socialism, secularism and democracy. Thus, there can be a complete alliance and understanding between both of them on the basis of these fundamental principles. The country election results in India so far have also established the fact that the majority of the Sikhs have always been the voters of Congress, now recognised as Congress (I). The Sikhs have also a great regard for Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, builder of the nation and Smt. Indira Gandhi, "mother of nation".

The Sikhs have always been very loyal to the country. The history is full of their services and sacrifices for the country and the suffering of humanity. The Sikhs have also played a very dynamic role in the industrial and revolutionary agricultural advancement of the country.

The entire Sikh community, with hearts burning with the spirit of service and sacrifice for the country, can be banked upon for all types of sacrifices and support, provided some suitable initiative is taken by the Government of India in the desired direction to satisfy them with the fulfilment of their demands.

Large-scale projects may be set up in Punjab to feed the small scale industries of the state. The remaining Punjabi-speaking areas may be included in the Punjab state. Punjabi may be made compulsory language in the schools in the Punjabi-speaking areas in the country. The Sikhs, as a minority community in India, should enjoy the right of reservation of seats in services, legislature, educational and professional institutions. They have a religious bent of mind. They shall feel very happy if they enjoy complete religious independence in India, and suitable assistance or facilities are provided to them by the Government of India for the promotion of their religion which is purely based on

the divine teachings of Almighty and preaches universal brotherhood. Chandigarh must be included in the Punjab and other remaining Government projects in the Punjab may be handed over to the Punjab Government.

I would, therefore, request Union Home Minister Zail Singh to pay special attention to the

advancement and prosperity and to the some above-noted just demands of the Sikhs at the earliest for their fulfilment under the highly appreciable social justice programme of our worthy prime minister.

—Amarjit Singh Ahluwalia
New Delhi.

Chandigarh and Boundary Commission

Sir, On page 9 of your Weekly dated 16.3.81, under the heading University News letter the following is written:

How important this sphere is may be judged by the fact that the Shah Boundary Commission had, at the time of demarcating the boundaries of Punjab in 1966, recommended, by majority verdict, exclusion of Chandigarh from Punjab by relying upon alleged larger number of students who had opted for Hindi as a subject in their University examination than those who had opted for Punjabi.

I beg to point out that this version is not quite correct. What actually happened is given below:—

Those days Mr. Gulzari Lal Nanda was the home minister at the centre. One day many daily papers carried the following news:

A deputation of Hindus of Haryana met the home minister and when they came of the room whose interview took place, every man was extremely happy but light lipped.

But soon after, the cat was out of the bag. Mr. Nanda has asked them that if they promise to get him elected to the Lok Sabha in the next Elections from Haryana, he will give them Chandigarh. The deal was struck and is almost happened as planned.

Mr Nanda appointed a boundary commission and instructed them to be guided by the figures of the previous census for determining Hindi-speaking and Punjabi-speaking areas. He knew that Chandigarh area has been shown as Hindi-Speaking

by bigoted Hindus who has declared Hindi as their mother tongue although in their homes they speak Punjabi.

Now if all the three members of the Commission had returned a Unanimous Verdict, Chandigarh was lost to Punjab for ever. Luckily, there was one member who defined Mr Nanda's hints and said Chandigarh must go to the Punjab, other two was to Haryana.

When the report was out, Sikhs were taken aback. They raised hue and cry, Sant Fateh Singh said that he would burn himself if Chandigarh was not given to Punjab. Sardar Pheruman went on hunger strike and died after about 84 days.

Sikhs are nowhere near Hindus in cleverness and astuteness who had long back forced Hindus to declare Hindi as their mother tongue. They had planned for ahead. But when the question of sacrifice comes—Hindus are nowhere near Sikhs.

The centre could have gone by the majority decision 2 to 1 and given Chandigarh to Haryana but in their heart of heart they knew that injustice had been done to the Sikhs. So they found out a via media and made Chandigarh a Union territory.

It will not be out of place to mention that soon after Mr. Nanda had to resign from the Cabinet and he went at unhonoured and unsung.

That the story about Mr Nanda is borne out by the fact that he himself gave a statement to the press, "I am needlessly being planned for giving Chandigarh to Haryana. What could I do when the figures were that".

—Amolak Singh
Chandigarh

Our Subscription Rates

INDIA

Yearly Subscription

Rs. 35/-

FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Country	By Sea Mail	By Air Mail
U.S.A. & Canada	Dollars 15	Dollars 35
U.K. & all other		
Countries in Europe	£ 8	£ 15
East African Countries	Shillings 125	Shillings 240
Malaysia & Singapore	Dollars 30	Dollars 60